TELLS THE FACTS AND NAMES THE NAMES

CounterPunch

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The Best Way to Create Jobs?

Cut the Work Week

By Eugene P. Coyle

We have been trained to think of unemployment and stagnant pay as a shortage of jobs. That fits the neoliberal sales message of endless growth and expansion. If we think of our problem as shortage of jobs and stagnant wages, the policy is always stimulus, more production, more consumption, more growth. In short, the treadmill the economy has been on for years. The stimulus is a high-energy drink to get us back on the treadmill. But if we think of the problem as a surplus of workers instead of a shortage of jobs, then a third tool beyond monetary and fiscal policy emerges – cutting the workweek. From that good things unfold. The policy becomes more jobs, environmental cleanup, and a transfer of income from the richer to the poorer. Most important, it is scalable to fit the problem. Standard working hours can be cut again as needed, while monetary and fiscal policies are exhausted and at the limit of how low interest rates and how high the deficit can go.

A pay squeeze was going on for years before the current collapse in the economy made it worse. The economy crashed because for years workers in the U.S.A. have been unable to buy, out of income, what they produce. Real wages have hardly grown, even for well-trained and well-educated workers. Bureau of Labor Statistics data show a drop in real money earnings for every educational group, from high school dropout through college graduate, over the period 2000-2005. Even master's degree holders showed a drop, unless the degree was a professional one. Only those with an M.D., M.B.A., J.D. or Ph.D. saw gains in money earnings. While pay stagnated, per capita GDP soared, meaning the gains were going to profits rather than

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Bad to Worse to Catastrophic

Oil Drilling Under Clinton, Bush and Obama

By Jeffrey St. Clair

The mood in the Alaska office of the Minerals Management Service (MMS) was festive. Word had just reached Anchorage that the president was preparing plans to expand offshore drilling in Alaska. John Goll, the service's regional director, summoned his top lieutenants to his office for a briefing of the joyous news. After confirming the rumors that had circulated all morning, Goll invited "all hands" in the office to join him for coffee and pastries. At the center of the table the cheering staffers were greeted by a large cake, with "Drill Baby Drill" scrawled across it in chocolate icing.

The year was not 2004. The president was not George W. Bush. This scene took place in 2009, a few months into Barack Obama's first term as president.

As it turned out, Goll had several reasons to be upbeat. Not only had the new administration steamrolled its environmentalist allies and decided to move forward with new drilling operations along Alaska's fragile coastline, but Goll and his troubled agency had survived the presidential transition intact. Goll, who was appointed to the powerful post of Alaska regional director in 1997 during the Clinton administration's drive to escalate drilling on the North Slope, had come into his prime as a bureaucratic facilitator of big oil under George W. Bush.

As detailed in a Government Accountability Office investigation of the Alaska Office of the MMS under Goll's tenure, the relationship between the government regulators and the oil industry was incestuous. The report revealed an agency which approved nearly every drilling plan without restrictions, muzzled internal dissent and gagged agency scientists. Environmental reviews, when they were undertaken – which was rarely – were cursory and fast-tracked. The only obligation for the oil companies was: just drill. Drill where you want, how you want.

There's nothing to indicate that after Ken Salazar piously declared that he was going to weed out and reinvent the MMS as a fierce regulatory watchdog, Goll and his cronies did anything but chuckle.

Perhaps Goll knew more about the real Salazar than the mainstream environmental groups who had blindly lauded the man-in-the-hat's appointment as interior secretary. In the first year of the Obama administration, Salazar's Interior Department had put 53 million acres of offshore oil reserves up for lease, far eclipsing the records set by the Bush administration. This staggering achievement probably came as no surprise to Goll and his oil industry cronies. When Salazar served in the U.S. Senate, he publicly chided the Bush administration for the lethargic pace of its drilling operations in the Gulf of Mexico. Peeved, Salazar co-sponsored the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, which opened an additional eight million acres of the Gulf to new drilling.

In this optimistic spirit, Goll's office proceeded to swiftly and blithely approve one of the most contentious oil drilling plans of the last decade – a scheme by Shell Oil to sink exploratory wells in Beaufort and Chukchi Seas, crucial habitat for the endangered bowhead whale.

The drilling plan was hastily consecrated on the basis of a boilerplate environmental review despite the fact that even a minor oil spill in these remote Arctic seas would prove to be an uncontrollable eco-

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pay. The picture is not better now.

Following Larry Summers, the Obama administration is attacking the problem from the wrong direction. They believe that a dose of Keynesian spending to add to demand will make everything good again. The Republicans are stuck even further back in time, advocating tax subsidies to business to hire workers to turn out more stuff for which there is no market and little use. The twin deficits of the federal budget and balance of payments constrain politically both tax cuts and government spending. Our problem isn't cyclical but chronic. Stimulus is essential to create jobs immediately, but it won't cure the economy. The real remedy lies in dealing with the imbalance between the demand for work and its supply.

A problem that has always been called a job shortage is rather a worker glut. Employers have been able to cut and hold wages down because there is an excess supply of trained and eager workers on the job market. The reasons for the surplus are mostly familiar. Corporations send production abroad to get cheaper labor. The total of U.S. jobs eliminated that way in recent years is disputed but is probably more than 5 million.

At the same time, we have added job seekers from abroad in significant numbers. Immigration of skilled workers on special visas lobbied for by high-tech employers and the more publicized large-scale immigration of documented and undocumented workers from distressed economies like Ireland, Mexico and other countries have added significantly to the labor surplus. The share of immigrants in the U.S. work force climbed steadily since its post-WW II low in 1970, and by 2007 reached over 15 per cent of the total, according to *The State of Working America 2008-2009* and sources cited in it.

Moreover, as family income stagnates and the very rich get more and more of the national income, women and other family members have chosen or been forced by necessity to enter paid work. In an attempt to sustain income, families send more workers into the job market or work longer hours. In this way, families achieve income gains that are ultimately self-defeating, as general wage levels remain depressed by the collective increase in labor hours on offer.

Everyone cheers if manufacturing 100 cars took 500 workers last year and only 490 this year. Productivity has jumped, but ten people are out of work. A productivity gain, taken alone, means a loss of jobs.

Finally, the unremarked elephant in the room: productivity gains. Productivity gains are seen as a blessing, raising the national income. TV anchors announce the quarterly number and remark that productivity improvements are what allow business to pay higher wages – without adding the obvious, that they seldom do. Everyone cheers if manufacturing 100 cars took 500 workers last year and only 490 this year. Productivity has jumped, but ten people are out of work. A productivity gain, taken alone, means a loss of jobs. The long-term trend in productivity growth in the U.S. economy is around 2 to 2.5 per cent a year, climbing to 2.7 per cent annually over the past decade.

Each decade at this rate results in elimination of a shocking 25 per cent of our jobs. With other jobs sent abroad and immigrants and other workers added to the supply, the official unemployment rate would soar above today's 9.7 per cent, unless new demand required adding workers. Against this background, the embrace of growth is easily understood.

What replaced the eliminated jobs was shopping. The U.S.A. is on its treadmill for jobs rather than stuff. Yes, we like the stuff, but we are really shopping to keep each other working. The stimulus is simply the government buying stuff or giving money to others to buy stuff, so still others will have the income to buy stuff. As noted above, our problem isn't cyclical. It is chronic. A stimulus jolt won't repair a dysfunctional economy. A different approach is required.

That different approach is cutting the workweek. The supply of workers must be reduced to meet weak demand for workers. At the end of the Great Depression, when the nation similarly faced a severe jobs issue, a new Wages and Hours law in 1940 cut the workweek from six to five days, the now standard 40 hours. Hours have not been reduced in the 70 years since, despite the relentless gains in productivity.

The ideal first step would be national adoption of the four-day workweek, retaining the eight-hour day. A first step, more practical politically, is to make a cut of four hours per week, with the cut taken as eight hours every other week. The standard routine would be five days one week, four the next, for a 10 per cent cut in hours.

Productivity gains and a transfer of national income from profits to pay will cover the cost of a shorter workweek. A temporary cut in the withholding tax can support the transition to the shorter hours at first. Korea in 2004 used a temporary cut in payroll taxes for a transition to shorter hours, cutting to a five-day week. A phased program there began with employers of 1,000 or more workers. A year later, businesses employing more than 300 workers were added to the program, with smaller employers joining gradually thereafter.

In the U.S.A., the payroll tax is 7.65 per cent for the employer plus the same amount paid by workers for a total of 15.30 per cent. Suspending the employer's portion and adding the average annual productivity gain would make the em-

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Interviewing Howard Blake

Have the CIA and British Intelligence Destroyed Classical Music in the Western World?

By Afshin Rattansi

When it comes to the visual arts, there is a plethora of evidence for the CIA's activities in fostering the work of U.S. abstract expressionism by means of Nelson Rockefeller's New York Museum of Modern Art, which deprecated figurative, and often populist, art in favor of what Rockefeller approvingly called "free enterprise painting." It is a well-known tale, much of it focused on the CIA-backed U.S. Congress for Cultural Freedom, which many know from Frances Stonor Saunders' book, *Who Paid The Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*.

Perhaps less well known from Saunders' book is the bizarre story of how intelligence agencies sought to take charge of classical music. I recently talked to Howard Blake, pianist and conductor and arguably Britain's best-known living composer, about his reading of the allegations made by Saunders. I ran into Blake amid the melee of those demonstrating against Zionism in High Street Kensington after the killing of anti-Zionist peace protestors on the Freedom Flotilla to Gaza. (The Israeli embassy is in nearby Billionaire's Row). He was ruminating on writing something in solidarity with those who died.

Blake, most famous for his work for the Oscar-nominated film, *The Snowman*, was commissioned by the Philharmonia Orchestra for the 30th birthday of Princess Diana in 1991, as well as music to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Organization in 1995. One would think that Howard Blake, awarded the Order of the British Empire by the queen, would have baulked at allegations about intelligence services controlling classical music, given his success and his own place in "the establishment," but the man whose dramatic oratorio *Benedictus* was premiered in Westminster Cathedral with Cardinal Hume as narrator, says the U.S. Congress for Cultural Freedom not only cast a shadow on his life but continues to affect the lives of young composers today.

Howard Blake: If you even suggest the idea, people laugh at you and say that you are a crazed conspiracy theorist. However, when I read Frances Stonor Saunders' book, it confirmed something that I have known from my own personal experience but was never able to prove or even completely understand. It had been impossible to understand why such a policy would have been adopted, or why people could have been taken in, in the way that they were.

Blake, the man whose *Benedictus* was premiered in Westminster Cathedral with Cardinal Hume as narrator, says the U.S. Congress for Cultural Freedom not only cast a shadow on his life but continues to affect the lives of young composers today.

Afshin Rattansi: *Some would surely argue that composers complaining about CIA and MI6 involvement in preventing their work from being performed is the kind of thing one might expect from disgruntled artists?*

HB: Of course, some might say just that – "you're saying this because no one wants to play your music and it is just sour grapes." However, I have some justification for saying it because I have become a successful composer and I actually have somehow found my way through this maze. But the maze has haunted me and troubled my life right from my second year at the Royal Academy of Music until now, half a century. At 18, I won a scholarship to the Royal Academy as a pianist, taking composition as a second study. The first term was fine. My composition professor was Howard Ferguson and the first thing he asked me to do was to make a folk song arrangement (in the English tradition of Vaughan Williams or Walton, both then still alive and working.) We were looking at classical models, studying counterpoint, harmony, orchestration, and so on. In my second term, he raised the hurdle and set me a theme by Bartok on which to write variations. It was European and exciting! This really set me alight, and I wrote my first serious piece of classical composition – *Variations on a theme of Bartok*.

It was entered for a prize, and my piano professor Harold Craxton was so impressed that he asked his star pupil Thorunn Tryggvaason to perform it at her final recital. But something very odd happened at this moment and everything changed. The word went around that one had to write twelve-tone music. This wasn't a new thing since, let's face it, it had started around 1900. Fifty-eight years later, we were suddenly being instructed to write atonally.

Surely this was just one of many exercises as part of your degree?

HB: Yes, as such it would have been fine. I remember saying to Howard Ferguson, "Well, let's study it," and he said, "No, it wouldn't be for you."

It was a strange time. He suddenly resigned. It seemed that he had realized that what he was writing was no longer acceptable. Somehow or other, I was dumped along with him, and I stopped writing music. I was nineteen.

Did they say you were basically very conservative? Would you say that about yourself?

HB: I happened to have written a few things at school in Brighton, but I wasn't at the Royal Academy to study composition. It was their idea that I did so, actually. I showed them a piece, and they liked it and they said I ought to study composition. It hadn't occurred to me whether I was conventional or conservative or anything else. I basically won a scholarship to study piano. I was playing Beethoven, Chopin and Bach, and so on. I just adored great classical music and suddenly had to grapple with this sea change in attitude. So, I just gave up writing. I thought that I must have no aptitude for it. I did approach the BBC, Sadler's Wells and others, I remember, but didn't get anywhere. I felt I was a square peg in a round hole.

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Because "they" were going for atonal classical music? Who were the top classical contemporaries?

HB: Well, Peter Maxwell-Davies, Benjamin Britten, Tippett ... but there was a whole sheaf of 12-tone composers like Humphrey Searle, Elizabeth Lutyens, Thea Musgrave, and they were played at The Proms and were held up as "state of the art."

When did it dawn on you that there was a conspiracy?

HB: I didn't see it as a "conspiracy"; I saw it as a policy adopted by members of the musical establishment, who presumably had their reasons for taking it. I took the attitude as a fact of life, a *fait accompli*. It didn't dawn on me for a very long time, because I moved away from the classical music world and into the film world. So, I "grew up" as a composer for feature films, where the problem didn't arise. However, *The Snowman* has achieved its gigantic success very much because it is pigeonholed within film and NOT classical music. Therefore, it is no threat. For serious concert work it is far more difficult. It only dawned on me that such a weird conspiracy could have emanated from the CIA when I read Saunders' book. It is far easier to believe that a secret cabal of musically ignorant, politically motivated paranoids could create such a system than to believe that any people who genuinely love the wonderful art of music could even dream of causing such damage!

But surely Beethoven and Bach were considered unconventional in their own times, and so you were showing your own lack of understanding of the history of music by not understanding this relatively newer composition mode?

HB: I was trying to find a way to express myself and, of course, I was looking at all sorts of modern music and listening to all sorts of music, just as I continue to listen to every sort of music to this day. But as far as my experience went as a student, the advice to restrict myself to atonalism wasn't very helpful and I gave up composition and presumed I was not any good at it. I didn't know what to do and I had become a nuisance, and the RAM seemed to want to get rid of me, except that I had won a three-year scholarship. At that moment, I became interested in film. It seemed like a free medium. It appeared that people could make films any way they wanted. And they didn't have films with completely black screens! They were expressing stuff that was actually about stuff. Film also used music in a completely free way. And there didn't seem to be any restriction on film or its music at all.

I wanted to immerse myself in film, and I tried to get a place at a film school but without success. I left the Royal Academy in 1960 and managed to get a job at the National Film Theatre [NFT] as a film projectionist. All I had was a degree in piano playing, which wasn't very useful. So I got that job and immersed myself in cinema. I made a film in my spare time. I got a little group together and I found this experience marvelous. I could compose my own music and put it on the film soundtrack. I was absolutely riveted by all the people who were making films at the time. And I met, believe it or not, Visconti, Fellini, Vincente Minelli, Jean Renoir and Fritz Lang who came to lecture. I recorded them! It was an amazing place to be. This was around 1961.

In the first bar, it had nineteen hemi-demi-semi quavers played by the entire viola section in the space of a crochet. I asked whether he thought it was playable. He said, "no." I asked whether he could sing it. And he said, "no."

I became fascinated by the music of film, and we used to run films from Brazil, China, Iran, Poland, Algeria, Ukraine, Sweden – from everywhere in the world. It was fascinating to see and hear. There was a lot of jazz on film, and I also became interested in that. All of this was completely outside the practice of any music academy at that time, which tended to dismiss jazz as garbage. After a while working at the NFT, I found that I missed music so much that I started to play piano in pubs and clubs, and this led me into the session world where I played at Abbey Road on recording sessions. This, in its turn, led toward writing for film, and, with the help of Bernard Herrmann and Laurie Johnson, I got to work composing and conducting *The Avengers* TV series. One could say that I became an outsider in relation to the classical music world and found a home in the film and studio world.

I remember an amusing example of the attitudes of that time. Driving back from *The Avengers* at Elstree Studios, I dropped in on Harold Craxton. He asked what I was doing. I said, I was writing and conducting scores for 25-piece big band for *The Avengers* at Elstree. "Is that jazz," he asked? I said, "Yes, essentially I suppose it is jazz-based." "You learnt to play jazz, did you?" he asked. I said I did. "How long did that take you? An afternoon?" he replied. I thought that such ignorance was beyond belief.

Despite my distancing in regard to the classical establishment, I hadn't given up on serious composition. I wrote a *Symphony in One Movement* during this time of pubs and clubs, and finished it whilst working at Elstree. I had found a small-time publisher for something I had written. His name was Richard Franks. He was Polish and before the war had been the music director at Krakow Ballet. He thought I was a good composer and that I should take this piece to the BBC. The BBC were totally uninterested.

And who was the gatekeeper at the BBC, at that time?

HB: We are talking about Willliam Glock, BBC Controller of Music from 1959 to 1972. Glock put the block on mainstream music composed in England (my friend Malcom Arnold was one of the principal victims and frequently said so). Glock had a henchman/assistant called Hans Keller, who was very much ... well, the UK satirical magazine, *Private Eye*, called him Hans Killer. Glock abolished all light music and publishers in London and they all went out of business, as did the light orchestras. For me, I believe that light music was a bridge that introduced the greater public to the idea and language of serious music, and for many years the BBC damaged that link. (Many of the greatest composers wrote light music – Sibelius, Elgar, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, to name a few.)

Glock's theory was that it was all right to play early music. Romantic music presented a problem. What they really wanted was atonal music – "cutting edge." Reading Frances Stoner Saunders' book confirmed what I always felt but really couldn't understand. It appears, and

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it's documented, that the CIA, working for the U.S. government, had come to the conclusion that the Soviet Communist government of the U.S.S.R. was occupying the high ground in terms of culture. It had the best ballet companies in the world, and they were considered the greatest performers of traditional ballet. (Nureyev caused an enormous sensation.) Prokofiev wrote the most successful ballet of the 20th century under Stalin – *Romeo and Juliet*. He was a truly major composer. The U.S.S.R. was producing the best violinists, like Oistrakh, the best pianists, like Sviatoslav Richter. They had the best conductors … and all this just wouldn't do.

The CIA, burdened by the American cultural inferiority complex of that period, seemed to fear that their culture was regarded as producing "hillbilly" stuff. Elvis Presley and so on. "We are losing points," they said, "we have got to prove that the whole point of the capitalist system is that it is free and people can do whatever they like, and it takes the ideas of the mind forward, and we have got to prove that the communist bloc is actually looking backward and is not free." This led to them awarding a hefty budget from the CIA to promote this view. For instance, composers would be sought who would exemplify this principle. They discovered that the composer, John Cage, had written a totally silent piano sonata. "He comes on and just sits there and looks at the music and just thinks about it. That is really interesting. So, we'll push that." I mean, somebody must have said, "but don't you think that is nuts?" I mean, it would appear to anyone with a brain that that is nuts. But they said, "We like John Cage." So, Cage became a major figure, all of a sudden.

Now, becoming a major figure in the arts does not happen by accident. It has to be backed up by the cognoscenti. It has to be proclaimed worthwhile. About 1970, I started to realize that, due to the above situation, the chances were remote that any serious music that I wrote was likely to be hailed by the classical world. It was acceptable to write "commercially" to keep the economy circulating but far less acceptable to interfere in "high culture," which was closely monitored and guarded. I had done very well for a while, writing every sort of music imaginable for the media but had again felt that this "wasn't what I wanted to do." I wanted to write "real" music that stood alone and that said something, and somehow I had been unable to do that.

I took time out and decided to rethink my entire outlook. I thought, "I am going to write music that I want to write. If it turns out that it is considered conservative or rubbish or bad or boring, well… tough, because I can only write the way that I can write and do the best that I can do, and I am only alive once. I will write regardless. What can anyone do about it?" I got out of London and moved to the country in Sussex. I started re-examining the whole of classical music in a way I had never done before. I started re-examining the forms of Beethoven, Stravinsky, Bach, Schubert, Mozart, and I rediscovered the fantastic world of great orchestral music, which I had never truly experienced. It was an inspiration. I didn't have my own original style but was searching for one. In 1973 I wrote a piece, *Diversions for Cello*, which later became *Diversions for Cello and Orchestra*. It was eventually done with the Royal Philharmonic in 1989.

The CIA, burdened by the American cultural inferiority complex of that period, seemed to fear that their culture was regarded as producing "hillbilly" stuff. Elvis Presley and so on.

Not much of conspiracy then – the Royal Philharmonic was performing your work!

HB: Sixteen years is quite a long time to wait for a performance. But you're right, it did happen! Francis Stonor Saunders mentions another dimension of CIA involvement, when she says that art forms were seen to be dominated by white males. The thought was: ''Let's find a black singer and make her into a great diva". They discovered Leontyne Price and gave her huge promotion. As Saunders put it, Moscow at the time could say that the "U.S.A. claims to be free but is killing black people down in Alabama and denying human rights." The idea of promoting those like Price would help to change this perception, and it started to become another policy of the Agency.

And so it was, many claim, the policy vis-à-vis the visual arts – but surely now the Berlin Wall has come down, it doesn't have any effect?

HB: Well, up until the Wall came down, the BBC tended to only support anyone within the avant-garde, which fitted in with this attitude… the same attitude that exists in the visual arts. Anybody painting a picture of anything recognizable would be laughed at. But even after the fall of Soviet Communism, the attitude still lurks. It still hasn't been got rid off, because of the legacy of decisions made in the 1950s. And it is laughable that some are saying we are doing it because of the Soviets, when all of that stopped years ago. It simply became integral to the way universities and institutions were set up, and nobody has so far got around to changing it.

I'll give you an example of this. Two weeks ago, I went to the giving of prizes at the Royal College of Music as a guest of the director Colin Wilson. Prince Charles was there, and they gave out prizes for the best pianist and the best cellist, and then they came to prizes for composition. And they gave a doctorate to somebody I had never heard of – a 60-year-old Swede. And the grateful recipient read out that he had spent his whole life examining ways of making sounds from instruments that nobody else had ever made and that he didn't believe in the relationship of the audience to music. He believed that the sounds that are made exist as entities in a world of his own making and that that world has a right to exist. And I thought – more madness! It is the same old stuff, and it saddened me to think that people are pouring millions into institutions and that opera houses are being built around the world for this. Yes, they are perfectly happy to give money to anybody who plays, providing they play stuff that is at least 200 years old. Or, that nobody wants to listen to. Surely, there must be at least one promising student composer whom we could all be proud of – and we'd actually like to listen to?

But surely the policy has failed when it comes to you, given your popularity?

HB: Well, I have never managed to be able to talk to anyone at the BBC about the music that I write. I have now reached the stage in my life – I have reached opus 620 – that I despair for younger compos-

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ers. I despair of Faber Music, which actually took my work, *The Snowman*, and which made all the money for their firm, only to invest it in people who write the sort of garbage we're discussing here and stamp on everything else. I finally got all of my music rights back in 2004 and I publish myself. I have a crusading energy to do that and now sell my music over the web and get to people from all over the world. This is through no help of the "establishment" and, if I told you the appalling story of Faber Music litigating against me between 1998-2000, you would know what I mean. But the legal system makes such revelation difficult.

What about the process itself? Are you really suggesting that the heads of top classical music institutions were in touch with the security forces?

HB: They appear out of nowhere. They get lots of funding and they are played on the BBC and their names are littered all over the world, and one asks, "Who is listening to this stuff?" There's one famous, notable example: Elliott Carter, the American composer who is now over 100 and has been massively pushed. He came over to London several years ago and had the whole of the Royal Festival Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the whole of the outside of the Festival Hall with a huge placard proclaiming the "Elliot Carter Festival."

But are you suggesting that UK arts administration officials went over to the U.S. and talked to Agency officials, or are you talking about MI6?

HB: I believe MI6 cooperates with CIA, but I wouldn't know how.

Actual art administrators whom you would meet at concerts or whatever?

HB: I went to the biggest concert of the Elliot Carter Festival out of interest and thought, "This is costing a fortune." I wondered who it was all for. I bought a ticket in the side-stalls, and I sat there and I looked over and saw William Glock, now retired and in his 60s. He was the pope of that whole school of making music incomprehensible. He was there along with Sally Cavender, the PR director from Faber Music, one or two from Boosey and Hawkes publishers – one or two critics and some BBC staff. All in all, about sixteen people. There was no one else in the whole auditorium – not one – except for me who was looking at them. I heard Mr. Glock say to them in the bar, "What a resounding success this is!"

But what proof?

HB: Faber and Faber were evidently tied to *Encounter* magazine, the literary magazine co-founded in 1953 by Faber poet Stephen Spender and later co-edited by neoconservative, Irving Kristol.

I know that, say, Mayakovsky is out of print, but I would never think that Faber and Faber has been told by MI6 to make it go out of print.

HB: I think it would have been a bit more subtle than that.

So, it is the legacy of that Cold War thinking? They don't need MI6 agents in publishers' offices?

HB: I think, it's become integral, institutionalized – in the Arts Council, the universities.

After the performance, I met a city banker at the patron's dinner. He asked me whether I was the composer, and went on to say that he "instinctively distrusts anything he can understand."

You mean that the next generation notices what is preferred and what styles to take up?

HB: Yes, indeed. Here's a story to prove what I'm trying to say. Several years ago, I went into a piano bar in Kensington, and there was a boy playing the piano. I got talking to him and asked what he was doing. He said he was a 5th year student at the Royal College of Music studying composition. I asked him what sort of stuff interested him. After all, he was playing Gershwin and things like "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square." It didn't sound like 5th year Royal College. When he said that he was doing this for money, I asked what he wrote for himself. He replied that he had actually won the top prize at the Royal College for the best modern music piece. I congratulated him and said that that was marvelous and asked whether I could take a look. He came over to visit me and brought out a score from his bag – a typical Stockhausen-looking post-Schoenberg/Boulez type of thing – and I looked at it. In the first bar it had 19 hemi-demi-semi quavers played by the entire viola section in the space of a crochet. I asked, whether he thought it was playable. He said, "no." I asked whether he could sing it. And he said, "no." I asked whether he knew what it sounded like, and he said that it didn't matter what it sounded like. He had won a prize and that, in order to get a degree, this was the way one had to write. Then he said he wanted to write film music like me. He had won a very notable prize that was against his very nature and intelligence.

But what about the fact that music that once seems obscure and from the academy then filters down to popular imagination?

HB: That is certainly the thought that is fed to us and what we are led to believe. But how true is it? Most of the real masterpieces, once given a decent performance, were recognized immediately. Tchaikovsky attended the first performance of *Carmen* and immediately said it would become the most popular opera of all time. He was right. It did, of course, take years to circulate and get known worldwide, but that is a different matter. Nowadays, with instant communication, a different time frame is in operation. It is more the case that the connoisseur expects a work to be incomprehensible and difficult, otherwise it must be suspect! I wrote a clarinet concerto for Thea King back in 1984 – a serious, passionate piece, not light music but using melodic lines, counterpoint, harmony and orchestration – it was commissioned by Thea for the English Chamber Orchestra.

After the performance, I met a city banker at the patron's dinner. He asked me whether I was the composer, and went on to say that he "instinctively distrusts anything he can understand." Well, if that is the establishment view – that music has to be incomprehensible to be any good … well, we are hearing the echoes of the U.S. Congress for Cultural Freedom, set up way back in 1950. These are the symptoms of the CIA and Ford Foundation-backed International Association for Cultural Freedom, sixty years on.

CP

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ST.CLAIR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

logical catastrophe. Indeed, under Goll's direction, the Alaska office of the MMS was so uninterested in environmental analysis that it had failed to even develop a handbook for writing environmental reviews, as required by the Department of Interior. Why bother, when Shell Oil could be depended on to write its own environmental analysis? That's efficiency.

Goll wasn't the only Bush holdover at MMS to survive the Obama transition. There is the scandalous case of Chris C. Oynes. He served for 12 years as the director of oil and gas leasing operations for the MMS in the Gulf of Mexico. Those were buxom years for the oil industry. During his tenure in the Louisiana regional office, Oynes approved nearly 1,000 new oil drilling permits, roughly a fifth of all the current drilling sites in the Gulf of Mexico. Few of these operations underwent even the most simplistic environmental reviews or on-site inspections. Instead, as detailed in a blistering report from the Interior Department's inspector general, under Oynes' watch the repeat offenders in the oil industry were allowed to police themselves, writing their own environmental analyses, safety inspections and compliance reports, often in pencil for MMS regulators to trace over in ink.

The inspector general concluded that the agency fostered a "culture of ethical failure." That may be putting it mildly. For Oynes and his colleagues, it wasn't about ethics but serving the interests of big oil. And he did that in a big way that meant billions for Gulf oil drillers.

Here's how it went down. In 1995, Congress, in collaboration with the Clinton administration, passed the Deep Water Royalty Relief Act, a bill meant to encourage oil companies like BP to begin the risky proposition of drilling for oil more than a mile beneath the surface of the Gulf. As an incentive to drill, the deepwater operators were exempted from paying royalties until the amount of oil produced hit certain price and production triggers. These triggers were supposed to be written into the lease contracts. For example, the price trigger was set at $28 per barrel. The companies were meant to pay royalties to MMS on all oil sold above this rate, which was substantially below the market price of crude in the late 1990s. But this language mysteriously disappeared from the contracts. One MMS staffer later told investigators with the inspector general's office that he had been instructed to remove the price trigger language from the leases.

The man who signed off on most of the 113 deepwater leases offered in 1998 and 1999 was the MMS's regional director at the time, Chris Oynes, who duly told investigators that he simply overlooked the missing language. But executives at Chevron, ever conscious of the bottom line, noticed the absence of price triggers and met with Oynes three times to discuss the matter. Apparently satisfied with the terms of the deal, Chevron plunged into the deepwater bonanza in the Gulf. For his part, Oynes said he had no recollection of these meetings.

A year later, officials at the Interior Department discovered the mistake. Panicky emails flew back and forth inside the agency. But instead of exposing the debacle and trying to rectify the problem, they covered it up for the next six years. The assistant director of MMS decided not to inform the head of the agency, and the sweetheart deal with deepwater drillers remained buried until 2006, when it was unearthed by Inspector General Earl Devaney, who called the affair "a jaw-dropping example of bureaucratic bungling."

In the first year of the Obama administration, Salazar's Interior Department had put 53 million acres of offshore oil reserves up for lease, far eclipsing the records set by the Bush administration.

Devaney put dozens of MMS officials under the microscope in an attempt to identify the official who ordered that the price triggers be removed from the deepwater leases. Oynes himself was made to take a polygraph test. But, in the end, Devaney found no smoking gun, largely because of the convenient death of one of the central players in the affair. Frustrated at every turn, the inspector general ended his investigation, appalled at the entire agency: "Simply stated, short of a crime, anything goes at the highest levels of the Department of Interior."

What Devaney termed a "blunder" ended up allowing the deepwater drillers to stiff the federal treasury out of an estimated $12 billion in royalty payments. Some might write this off as a monumental mistake. But at the MMS, these kinds of screwups always seem to end up bulging the pockets of the oil companies.

As for Oynes, he survived the royalty affair unscathed. He escaped indictment. He wasn't forced to resign. He wasn't even demoted. Instead, in 2007 Johnnie Burton, Bush's head of MMS, appointed Oynes assistant director of MMS in charge of offshore drilling. His charmed career continued a year later, when Ken Salazar, ignoring furious protests from environmentalists and former Interior Department staffers, decided to retain Oynes in that fatal post.

Oynes is the one constant figure in the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe. The project originated during his term in the Bush administration and was approved, under his watch, in the Obama administration. Despite the highly experimental nature of the drilling operation, the MMS's approval came without environ-

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mental review. It contained no special restrictions or impositions on BP's operating plan. Just like old times.

On May 16, however, after the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon rig and with a damaging new IG report on criminally lax safety inspections by the MMS at Gulf drilling sites during Oynes' years as head of the Louisiana regional office looming, he quietly resigned his post.

As Oynes skulked from his office, with oil tides coating the marshes of coastal Louisiana in an indelible brown crude, he must have looked back on his 30-year career with a sense of pride. Servicing big oil is precisely what MMS has always been about. The agency was created during the Reagan administration by James Watt as a bureaucratic handmaiden for the oil and gas industry. Oynes had done his job and done it well. As an MMS press release noted, "During his tenure in the Gulf of Mexico he conducted 30 lease sales and oversaw a 50 per cent rise in oil production."

And that, after all, is the name of the game.
CP

COYLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

ployer roughly financially whole for the change in the first year. Productivity typically jumps when hours are cut, so the relentless gains in productivity – past, present, and future – can also be appropriated to finance a cut to the four-day week.

For many jobs there would be little drop in output, for managers and workers alike find better ways to get the work out the door. There would be, nevertheless, a significant need for additional workers. If workers fight hard to keep income the same, profits would temporarily be hurt. The necessary correction in income distribution would occur.

Actual pay scales will be fought out, industry by industry, employer by employer, despite the transition support through suspending the payroll tax. A key to the economy's dysfunction, addressed neither by Democrats, Republicans, nor by the Tea Party, is the untenable shift of income to the richest people in the country over recent decades. The objection that unions are too weak now to keep income up is a reasonable one, but a fight at the office or job site to maintain pay when hours are cut, broad-based among all workers, could lead to strengthening unions, rather than depending on strengthening unions first, before fighting to cut hours.

The greenest jobs of all will be those created by adopting the four-day week. Jobs created by cutting hours rely less on buying stuff than does the treadmill approach. The jump in the quality of life will be pronounced, as we spend less of our lives working.

It is time to use a new tool for managing the economy. Cutting working hours is that tool. The fight to cut hours will be intense, but it was won in the Great Depression, the last time we faced a similar job crisis. **CP**

Eugene Coyle consults on natural resouce economics for environmental and consumer groups and governments. He advised the Mexican Senate's Constitutional Commisson and the House of Representatives of Brazil against electric privatization. He can be reached at eugenecoyle@igc.org

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